

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having the steps:

preparing a space which is essentially at least partially enclosed by a container and has a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid; and

conducting dry fluid through the wafer/hybrid holding device in order to temperature-regulate ~~heat-treat~~ the wafer/hybrid holding device;

~~said dry fluid being the fed-in fluid being conducted into the container and into said wafer/hybrid holding device from outside the space via a first line and leaving said wafer/hybrid holding device and container via a second line;~~

wherein at least a portion of the fluid having left the wafer/hybrid holding device is used to condition the atmosphere within the space ~~by being conducted back into the container via a third line;~~

wherein the portion is firstly temperature-regulated outside the space and then conducted back into the space via a further line; and

wherein the portion is temperature-regulated by being used for precooling the fed-in fluid in a heat exchanger out side the space, before being allowed to flow out within the space.

2. (Cancelled).
3. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in that the portion is firstly heat-treated and then allowed to flow out within the space.
4. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in that the portion is heat-treated outside the space and then fed back to the space.
5. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, characterized in that the portion is allowed to flow out within the space directly after it leaves the wafer/hybrid holding device.
6. (Currently Amended) A method for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having the steps:
preparing a space which is essentially enclosed by a container and has a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid; and
conducting a dry fluid through the wafer/hybrid holding device in order to temperature-regulate the wafer/hybrid holding device;
the fed-in fluid being conducted into said wafer/hybrid holding device from outside the space via a first line;
wherein at least a portion of the fluid having left the wafer/hybrid holding device is used to condition the atmosphere within the space;

wherein ~~The method according to Claim 1, characterized in that~~ a first portion of the fluid having left leaving the sample stage is firstly heat treated and then allowed to flow out within the space, and a second portion is allowed to flow out within the space directly after it leaves the wafer/hybrid holding device is firstly temperature-regulated outside the space and then conducted back into the space via a further line, and a second portion is allowed to flow out within the space directly after it leaves the wafer/hybrid holding device:

wherein the first portion is temperature-regulated by being used for precooling the fed-in fluid in a heat exchanger outside the space, before being allowed to flow out within the space.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim ~~4~~ 6, characterized in that at least one of the first and second portions can be regulated ~~as a function~~ in terms of the flow rate.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 3, characterized in that the portion is heat-treated in that it is used for precooling the fluid, outside the space before said portion is allowed to flow out within the space.

9. (Withdrawn) A device for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having:

space being at least partially enclosed by a container and having a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid;

a first line via which the fluid can be conducted into the container and into the wafer/hybrid holding device from outside the space;

a second line via which the fluid can be conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space; and

a third line via which at least a portion of the fluid can be fed back from outside the space into the space for conditioning the atmosphere within the space.

10. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 9, characterized in that the line device has:

wherein a temperature regulating device is provided between the second and third lines.

11. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 10, characterized in that outflow elements are provided at the end of the third line.

12. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 9, further comprising a fourth line via which the fluid can be conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device into the space.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 12, characterized in that a valve is provided for regulating the flow rate of the fourth line.

15. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 10, characterized in that the temperature regulating device has a heating device.

16. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 10, characterized in that the temperature regulating device has a heat exchanger to which at least a portion of the fluid leaving the space can be conducted.

17. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 16, characterized in that the heat exchanger is used to precool the fed-in fluid.

18. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 16, wherein the portion leaving the heat exchanger can be fed back at least partially into the space in order to condition the atmosphere.

19. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claims 9, characterized in that a further line is provided via which dry fluid can additionally be conducted directly into the space from outside the space.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Withdrawn) A method for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having the steps:

preparing a space which is at least partially enclosed and has a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid;

conducting a dry fluid into the space and through the wafer/hybrid holding device in order to heat-treat the wafer/hybrid holding device;

conducting said fluid from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space;

wherein at least a portion of the fluid which has been conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space is used to condition the atmosphere within the space by being conducted back into the space.